

Message Text

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HEREWITH FULL TEXT NEW YORK TIMES ITEM DECEMBER 12, 1973

HEADED "CAIRO'S CONFIDENCE IN KISSINGER IS REPORTED

SERIOUSLY SHAKEN"

CAIRO, DEC. 12 -- WESTERN DIPLOMATS SAID TODAY THAT THE CONFIDENCE OF EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS IN THE PERSONAL CREDIBILITY OF SECRETARY OF STATE KISSINGER HAD BEEN BADLY SHAKEN BY A MISUNDERSTANDING THAT DEVELOPED DURING HIS LAST VISIT HERE A MONTH AGO.

THE MISUNDERSTANDING, THEY SAID, CENTERS ON THE ISSUE OF A MINIMAL WITHDRAWAL OF ISRAELI FORCES WITHIN THEIR BRIDGEHEAD ON THE WESTERN BANK OF THE SUEZ CANAL AND ON THE PHRASING OF THE SIX-POINT CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT THAT MR. KISSINGER NEGOTIATED WITH PRESIDENT ANWAR EL-SADAT AND THEN PERSUADED THE ISRAELIS TO ACCEPT.

IN THE VIEW OF THESE DIPLOMATS, THE FIRST TASK THAT

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MR. KISSINGER FACES ON HIS ARRIVAL HERE TOMORROW WILL BE TO

REMOVE THE EGYPTIAN SUSPICIONS.

THERE IS A STRONG FEELING IN ARAB DIPLOMATIC CIRCLES HERE THAT THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE OF THE AGREEMENT WAS "A LAWYER'S TRICK" ENABLING THE ISRAELI FORCES TO STAY IN THEIR POSITIONS ALTHOUGH THE SPIRIT OF THE ACCORD REQUIRED THEIR WITHDRAWAL FROM AROUND SUEZ CITY LINES THEY HAD HELD AT THE CEASE-FIRE OF OCT. 22. THE ISRAELIS HAD EXPANDED THEIR BRIDGEHEAD SOUTHWARD BETWEEN THAT TRUCE AND THE ONE THAT WENT INTO EFFECT OCT. 24.

THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE -

THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUSE SAYS "BOTH SIDES AGREE THAT DISCUSSIONS BETWEEN THEM WILL BEGIN IMMEDIATELY TO SETTLE THE QUESTION OF THE RETURN TO THE OCT. 22 POSITIONS IN THE FRAMEWORK OF AN AGREEMENT ON THE DISENGAGEMENT AND SEPARATION OF FORCES UNDER THE AUSPICES OF THE UNITED NATIONS."

THE DIPLOMATS SAID THAT THE EGYPTIANS HAD ACCEPTED THE TEXT PROPOSED BY MR. KISSINGER IN THE BELIEF THAT HE UNDERSTOOD, AND EVEN SHARED, THEIR VIEW THAT ISRAELI FORCES SHOULD START AN ISRAELI, UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL TO THE CEASE-FIRE LINES OF OCT. 22.

THE EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS WERE SAID TO HAVE BEEN ENCOURAGED TO DO SO BY, AMONG OTHER THINGS, HIS PUBLIC STATEMENT THAT ISRAELI FORCES HAD MADE IMPORTANT TERRITORIAL GAINS AFTER THE CEASE-FIRE. MR. KISSINGER IS UNDERSTOOD TO HAVE DEFLATED THIS STATEMENT IN MORE PRECISE TERMS DURING HIS TALKS HERE.

ISRAELI FORCES REACHED THE OUTSKIRTS OF SUEZ CITY ON THE WESTERN BANK OF THE CANAL AND CUT OFF THE SUPPLY LINES OF THE EGYPTIAN III CORPS ON THE EASTERN BANK DURING THE FIRST DAYS FOLLOWING THE CEASE-FIRE, CALLED BY THE UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

THE TEXT THAT MR. KISSINGER PROPOSED, THE DIPLOMATS CONTINUED, APPEARED TO REFLECT THE SECURITY COUNCIL UNCLASSIFIED

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RESOLUTION OF OCT. 23, WHICH CALLED FOR A RETURN TO THE PREVIOUS DAY'S LINES.

THUS WHEN ISRAELI AND EGYPTIAN GENERALS SIGNED THE CEASE-FIRE AGREEMENT ON THE CAIRO-SUEZ ROAD NOV. 11, DIPLOMATS HERE EXPECTED IT TO BE CARRIED OUT IMMEDIATELY.

INSTEAD, THE DIPLOMATS POINTED OUT, IT TOOK FOUR DAYS OF BARGAINING TO SETTLE THE RELATIVELY SIMPLE ISSUE OF SUPPLIES FOR SUEZ CITY AND THE EGYPTIAN III CORPS AND FOR AGREEMENT ON PRISONER EXCHANGE.

THEN WHILE THE MILITARY TALKS TURNED TO THE WITHDRAWAL ISSUE, MAJ. GEN. AHARON YARIVI OF ISRAEL REJECTED ANY THOUGHT OF AN UNCONDITIONAL WITHDRAWAL TOWARD THE OCT. 22 LINES. INSTEAD, INVOKING THE AGREEMENT INSPIRED BY MR. KISSINGER, HE LINKED THIS IMMEDIATE ISSUE WITH THE LONG-RANGE PROBLEM OF "DISENGAGEMENT OF FORCES" IN THE SINAI PENINSULA.

TALKS BROKEN OFF -

ACCORDING TO THE DIPLOMATS, THE EGYPTIANS THIS FOUND THEMSELVES IN THE POSITION OF HAVING TO DEAL WITH THE LONG-RANGE ISSUE OF DISENGAGEMENT WHILE THE ISRAELIS WERE STILL WIELDING A TRUMP CARD--THE MILITARY BLOCKADE OF SUEZ AND THE III CORPS. THE EGYPTIANS WERE SAID TO HAVE EXPECTED TO DEAL WITH THE DISENGAGEMENT ISSUE AT THE GENEVA PEACE CONFERENCE.

THE MILITARY TALKS ON THE CAIRO-SUEZ ROAD WERE BROKEN OFF BY CGYPT ON NOV. 22 OVER THIS ISSUE. BUT, IT WAS SAID, A NOTE OF DISTRUST HAD CREPT BACK INTO NEWLY IMPROVED AMERICAN-EGYPTIAN RELATIONS BY THAT TIME.

EGYPTIAN OFFICIALS WONDERING ABOUT MR. KISSINGER'S INTENTIONS REPORTEDLY INQUIRED DIRECTLY AND THROUGH WESTERN EUROPEAN EMBASSIES WHETHER THE PHRASING OF THE WITHDRAWAL CLAUS WAS DELIBERATELY VAGUE TO PERMIT THE ISRAELIS TO HOLD ON TO THEIR POSITIONS, OR WHETHER IT HAD BEEN AN UNINTENTIONAL VAGUENESS DISCOVERED AND EXPLOITED

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BY THE ISRAELIS AFTERWARD.

THE ANSWER GIVEN TO EUROPEAN AMBASSADORS IN WASHINGTON, THE DIPLOMATIC SOURCES SAID, WAS THAT THE VAGUENESS KISSINGER HAD BEEN FULLY AWARE WAS DELIBERATE AND THAT MR. OF ITS IMPLICATIONS. (SIC.)

THE RESULT IN CAIRO WAS SAID TO BE BITTERNESS AND DISAPPOINTMENT TO THE POINT THAT SOME ARAB DIPLOMATS HERE CHARGED THAT MR. KISSINGER HAD ACTED "IN BAD FAITH."
END TEXT. RUSH

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